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seum; Monsieur Rio, the writer on art and author of a 'Life of Leonardo'; W. M. Rossetti, Holman Hunt and Baron Liphart.

"None of the specialists of to-day consider this beautiful little picture to be by the hand of Leonardo. It is ascribed pretty generally to Ambrogio da Predis; Mrs. Berenson finds that it has some analogy with that artist's copy of 'The Virgin of the Rocks' in the National Gallery. I will venture to suggest another name—that of Francesco Napolitano—as the probable author, basing my surmise, however, only on reproductions of his work and descriptions of his color. The 'Madonna and Child' in the New York Historical Society, a vastly inferior work, is the only picture ascribed to him which I have seen recently. Relying on photographs, however, I find a striking similarity of style and form between his acknowledged pictures and this. In the 'Madonna and Child' recently purchased by the Zurich Museum, out of a private

collection in Geneva, the landscape is practically the counterpart of the view through the opening at the right in Mrs. Holden's picture. The Zurich painting is signed with a punning signature accepted as undoubtedly Napolitano's. It has the same similarity to Ambrogio da Predis as has the picture in question."

To the "Madonna and Child Enthroned," with Saints Paul and Anthony at the left, Augustine and Sebastian at the right, gold background, by Lorenzo da San Severino, which is also illustrated, he refers as follows: "In this case the critics are remarkably unanimous, not only as regards the authorship of the picture, but its quality as well, and indeed no one could fail to feel the charm of its sweet sober color, the tranquillity of its expression, and the dignity of loveliness of its personages. One of these is particularly alluring—the exquisite young gentleman with a green sprig in the pink cap saucily set on his golden curls, who poses as St. Sebastian."

A PECULIAR TYPE OF AMERICAN ART

BY WILLIAM JEAN BEAULEY

AMERICA rejoices in a choice assortment of statues and monuments which would fill the Parthenon of Greece to overflowing. Yet there are people who decry our country as having no art! Could Praxiteles or Bion, or any other of those vaunted ancients, have produced one such statue as we have myriads of, he would have been ready to die—nay, anxious.

No art in America? How can that be when nearly every county in this broad land has its soldiers' monument, and the rest are getting them? And they are all as alike as dolls in a toy factory.

A distinguished French art critic, making the tour of "the States," was vastly puzzled by this uniformity. "Far in Maine," said he, "one shows me the only work of art in the village; it is a statue of a soldier at parade rest. In Iowa

I ask for works of art, and one shows me again a statue of a soldier at parade rest. In New York, in Illinois, in Kansas, I ask the same question. Everywhere I am shown the same soldier, same overcoat, same rifle, same position. I fail to understand.

"In France you will find many statues all the way from the Belgian frontier to—how say you the midi?—the noon? Ah, yes; I thank you—the south. But each statue would be different. Why this multiplicity of granite infantrymen at parade rest showered over the United States like stones dropped from a meteor? * * * Your great Civil War? A-a-a-h! Parbleu! I have often heard of the horrors of war, but never before have mine eyes beheld them."

Yes, our great Civil War is responsible for many things. In this matter respon-

sible, not only for the number and subject of the monuments, but for the committees that choose them. Those committees are usually a county board of supervisors and some veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic called in to consult them. Veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic are consulted on account of their deep interest in soldiers' monuments. This is not strictly logical. You may be deeply interested in your child's illness, but unless you are a medical man you will not be of much use in a consultation over her case.

Now, questions of art are about the only ones wherein an untrained man's opinion carries any weight. When a bridge or a tunnel is to be built we consult engineers, not farmers or grocers. If a department store is to be stocked the proprietor asks a merchant's advice, not that of a cowboy. Yet the average cow-puncher knows as much about buying calico as the average county supervisor knows about buying works of art. Art is so far removed from his field of thought that if his life depended upon it he could not name a prominent painter, sculptor, or architect. Painting means to him the department of the county fair where his niece's water-colors are exhibited along with his wife's wax flowers and crazy-quilts. Sculpture means to him the pet lambs, the guardian angels, the Simply-to-Thy-Cross-I-Clings of the cemetery.

Usually the first step of a board of county supervisors toward a soldiers' monument is to advertise for designs. Sculptors and architects seldom respond, but that is not the fault of the supervisors. Nor is it irremediably their misfortune, for into the breach press the patriotic dealers in granite and bronze armed with large bunches of designs.

Why consult architects or sculptors? Here are ready-made pictures of monuments, all duly labeled and numbered, at prices running from \$1,800 to \$50,000. Why consult a regular physician when you can buy patent medicines ready put up in bottles at 25 cents or at \$2.50, as suits your purse?

Stone-men and bronze-men have been

on the watch for this opportunity. Each sends forth a glib agent bearing, like a Roman lictor, bundles of rods bound together. These fasces consist of large drawings made by that useful mechanical process known as the air-brush, mounted on linen and attached like maps to rollers. They are unfurled and displayed in the back room of the sheriff's office, or, with regard for the inspiration that comes with environment, in the local paintshop, whose proprietor also carries a line of "art materials," as duly announced on a palette hung out for a sign.

Designs No. 6-A, -B, and -C perhaps show simple obelisks of varying heights. Design No. 10-B may be a shaft surmounted by a soldier with his arms folded upon his musket and a corner of his cape-overcoat carefully turned back over his shoulder. A still more elaborate monument has the weary soldier at the base of the shaft, while on the opposite side a sailor with a pair of opera-glasses scans the horizon. As Mr. Owen Wister somewhere remarks, just as cowboys are forever "scouring the plains," so are sailors eternally "scanning the horizon."

When there are two figures to guard it, the shaft will probably be taller. It will be surmounted by a capital like an overgrown cauliflower, on top of which the Goddess of Liberty balances herself, blowing a trumpet or holding a wreath, or otherwise harmlessly employed. With some trivial changes the goddess becomes Fame or Peace. Sometimes a fine flight of imagination results in two columns, which might be styled in architecture as of the Grand Rapids Renaissance. Other artistic devices, such as a G. A. R. badge in bold relief, a rock-faced base or one or two eagles perched on balls, give a little snap to the foundation.

There are perhaps a score of designs in which these familiar elements are differently combined. "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*," our irreverent French critic would say. To impart a new flavor to the stale old ingredients, some of the pictures are colored—very blue sky, very green grass, very small men and women in the clothes of

twenty years ago walking about saying "A-a-a-a-h!" with uplifted hands.

A board of supervisors contemplates these glories awe-struck and uncertain. Presently some bold spirit pronounces offhand for design No. 10-B. Like a flock of sheep all make for No. 10-B, till some one plucks up courage to disagree. To disagree makes a man almost as conspicuous as to take the initiative and is much easier. Discussion rages, skilfully guided by the agent. There are alarums and excursions, adjournments and refreshments, until the committee, with unanimity approaching enthusiasm, selects design No. 16-B.

To the world at large "16-B" is but a cabalistic phrase devoid of meaning. So is "opus 45" to the unfortunate whose soul responds not to the master-musician. But the supervisor is as wise as a sight-seer at an exposition after he has learned to say "peristyle" and "pergola." His heart swells with mingled pride and patriotism when he familiarly mentions "No. 16-B."

He has done for his country on a large scale what he did on a small scale for his own door-yard when he set a toy cast-iron rabbit in his geranium-bed and a spotted metal watch-dog on his grass-plot. In the spring the village-painter—he who fills in the dull winter season graining up the saloon-door—will give the dog a new coat of green paint and a gold collar.

Many of the older drawings shown were lined across with narrow horizontal cracks from frequent rolling and unrolling before boards of supervisors in various parts of the country. Thus a considerable portion of our population has received the benefit of what might be called circulating art-libraries on rollers. Moreover, the system affords lucrative employment to many worthy persons who might otherwise be selling lightning-rods or toilet-soap.

Most of the designs are things of shreds and patches, remnants, reminiscences, weak copies of features in several compositions. They are clumsily put together by draughtsmen, who at best have served a brief apprenticeship

in some inferior architect's office, and are as competent to plan and carry out a monument as a butcher-boy to perform a surgical operation. For that matter, many of them are carried out in Germany.

Even art is subject to the laws of commerce. American contractors are able to furnish designs galore, and can have the bronze statuary executed in Germany at a price far below that in the United States. While in Munich recently, the writer had the doubtful pleasure of visiting a bronze-factory in company with a young art-student from Louisville, Ky. As a side issue the student was representing an American contractor, and it was his business to superintend the modeling of German figures for American memorials.

"Come with me," he said, "and see what they are making for one of our spread-eagle monuments."

We passed through a courtyard like a Campo Santo, filled with plaster casts of monstrosities which have been erected in memory of the heroic dead in many of our cities. We entered an atelier where a sculptor was at work, and beheld a big Bavarian model posing as an American soldier. Perhaps this explains some of the un-American types of figures and faces we see on American monuments.

So much for the native genius who models our patriotic memorials. There is more to be said of the native genius who presides over their selection. When Waukegan, Illinois, decided upon a soldiers' monument, the usual committee was appointed, and designs asked for in the usual way. Competition was brisk among the men in the mausoleum business. One of their agents was an unheralded genius who had previously sold petroleum for the Standard Oil Company, and thus naturally considered himself peculiarly fitted to expatiate on the beauties of sculpture.

The committee had chosen opus 17, a regular symphony in art, a soldier six feet six inches in height, and weighing twenty thousand pounds. But the cost of reproducing the figure in bronze was

greater than the appropriation. In a crisis like this a sculptor would have been of no use, an architect would have been an encumbrance, but a Standard Oil man was in his element.

"You see, gentlemen," said he, impressively, "your shaft is fifty feet high. When the figure is placed on top, looking at it from the ground, and judging it from the standpoint of perspective and artistic effect"—this phrase deserved an encore—"judging it, I say, from the standpoint of perspective and artistic effect," he repeated, "you will not be able to see much below the knees of the figure owing to the projection of the capital. I trust you are following me, gentlemen?"

They were, so far.

"Now, then," he concluded, triumphantly, "why not cut off the ankles and feet, which weigh two thousand pounds? We would thus effect a saving of \$780, and you would have a figure five feet eight inches high, which is typical of the American soldier.

Here was certainly a remarkable suggestion. It offered a solution of a difficult problem, of which no sculptor, however gifted, would have dreamed. The committee wavered, and no wonder, until some doubting Thomas interposed an objection. He admitted that a soldier with both legs shot off would be more typical of modern warfare than one in possession of all his limbs. "But, how in thunder could he stand on top of a monument under such conditions?" He would be more likely to be sent home on a furlough.

The argument carried the day, and the idea of mutilating the statue was abandoned.

What the soldiers' monument is to the board of supervisors the drinking-fountain is to the committee of aldermen. In fact, the fountain presents even greater perplexities, for in the monument the restricted sentiment limits the scope of the design. Joliet is a thriving city of forty thousand inhabitants, and is best known to fame as the home of one of Illinois' great penitentiaries.

Still, art is not neglected there, and

the city council decided that a drinking-fountain was needed on the public square. Accordingly an appropriation of several thousand dollars was made for the purpose, and a committee of aldermen appointed to carry it out. The city fathers would have been at a loss how to go to work had not a local dealer in hardware and harvesters come to the rescue with an illustrated catalogue issued by an iron and bronze concern. The catalogue contained numerous designs, from two chubby metal children under one umbrella—a charming ornament for a lawn—to a weeping woman kneeling beside a cross, touchingly inscribed "Lest we forget."

After faithfully poring over these pictures and discussing them from every point of view, the committee selected No. 21-A, guaranteed to hold eighteen barrels in the basin. The design showed a base of rough granite, rock-faced, with inscription and date; surmounting it was a fierce man on horseback in the act of thrusting a lance into a wild-eyed jaguar bounding toward him with wide open jaws. The composition is well known, as something similar has been extensively used in advertising a celebrated brand of bitters.

A year passed. Certain discolorations began to show upon the bronze, greatly to the anxiety and indignation of the aldermen. It assumed a greenish tinge, deeper in some places than others. The kindly elements were doing their work upon it, subduing its crudity, and bringing it into harmony with its surroundings. Here again a sculptor or an architect might have been found wanting, might have made no attempt to arrest the transformation. But the aldermen were more than equal to the emergency. They asked and obtained from the city council a generous sum to "paint the bronze up."

A chap with a pompadour and a walrus mustache took the contract and did the job well, in lead and oil, with a terra cotta finish. Had it been less shiny one could have really believed in an earthenware huntsman and jaguar.

Years passed, the paint began to scale

off, the greenish tone to reappear. Once more the city fathers rushed to the rescue of their town's greatest art-treasure. It happened this time that the chairman of the committee had just installed a heating apparatus in his home and was enraptured with the effect of a newly discovered paint for metal used upon it. Therefore a steam-heating decorator was employed to "do up" the bronze in aluminum paint, like that on the alderman's radiators. He did it up.

Still, in the public square, at Joliet stands that jaguar fountain, freshened each year with a new coat of paint, a solemn protest against the insinuation that Americans are indifferent to art, a shining example of their method of selecting monuments.

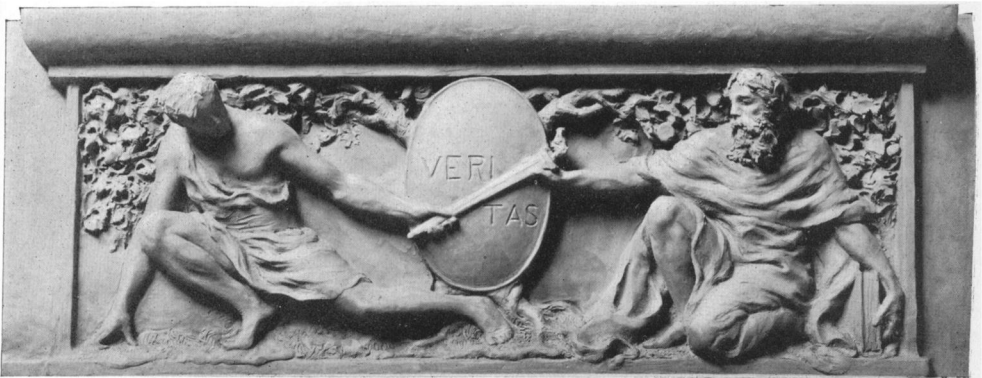
There are two reasons why sculptors and architects seldom answer advertisements for designs. One is that they know the designs will be judged by a commit-

tee blatantly ignorant of what constitutes a good design. The other is that an artist can not travel about the country out-talking a glib agent.

In some counties there is a third reason in the shape of an ordinance requiring the committee to accept the lowest bid, just as they would in buying coal or lumber. Therefore, if by any chance Augustus Saint-Gaudens should have offered a statue at \$5,000 and a stone-cutter should have offered one at \$4,500, the work of the greatest American sculptor would have been rejected.

Perhaps the day may come when American municipalities shall be educated out of trusting to sample books and eloquent salesmen. In time they may learn that it is safest to consult experts.

In the meantime the situation in regard to our crop of soldiers' monuments is "worse and worse and more of 'em."



FIREPLACE PANEL. PRESIDENT'S HOUSE. HARVARD UNIVERSITY

BELA L. PRATT

SCULPTURE BY BELA L. PRATT

ON this and the following pages are given a number of works in sculpture by Bela L. Pratt, of Boston. Taken as a whole the group shows both strength and versatility. There is work both in relief and in the round; sculpture which is primarily decorative in intent and that which is truly monumental. The "Nathan Hale" and the "Spanish

War Soldier Boy" are both inspiring types. No less vital and significant is the Whaleman, a detached figure from the monument to native seafarers erected at New Bedford. In striking contrast is the lithe, graceful and exquisitely chaste figure of the little maid that forms a part of Mr. Pratt's exquisite "Fountain of Youth."